



St Helens Adult and Community Learning Service

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

V2.1/Sep26



St.Helens Council



LIVERPOOL
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Contents

CONTENTS	3
ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY.....	4
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. PURPOSE	4
3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	4
<i>Learners</i>	4
<i>Staff</i>	5
4. COURSE INDUCTION	6
APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY SUMMARY	7

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

1. Introduction

Levels of attendance have a direct impact on the success of our learners. Good attendance and punctuality support learners to achieve their goals, gain qualifications and progress into further learning, volunteering or employment. High standards of punctuality and attendance also contribute toward a better and more successful learning experience and are valued by employers. St Helens Adult and Community Learning Service (ACL) has high expectations of attendance and punctuality and is committed to identifying and addressing issues that affect punctuality and attendance. This supports full participation and helps learners develop strategies to achieve their goals and make progress.

ACL recognises that adult learners may face complex barriers to attendance and will work with learners to identify barriers and refer them to appropriate support services, including external agencies if needed. Barriers may include health needs, caring responsibilities, employment commitments, financial hardship, transport difficulties, language barriers, trauma or issues relating to settlement and integration.

Attendance monitoring will be conducted fairly and in accordance with the ACL Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. Reasonable adjustments will be made for learners with disabilities or other protected characteristics to ensure inclusive participation.

ACL also recognises that attendance is only one indicator of learner engagement. Attendance information will be considered alongside learner participation, progress and achievement to ensure an appropriate and supportive response.

2. Purpose

The ACL team aims to improve attendance and punctuality through:

- Promoting a culture where good attendance and punctuality are expected, valued and support learner success.
- Raising awareness among learners of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and the impact on their success.
- Identifying attendance concerns early so that learners can receive support to overcome barriers and remain engaged in learning.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Learners

- 3.1. The ACL team expects all learners to be present for all scheduled classes. If a learner has a disability or medical difficulty that directly affects their attendance or ability to arrive on time this should be identified with the learner. Tutors will work with the learner to ensure that reasonable adjustments and support is in place and levels of expectation set accordingly.
- 3.2. Learners should be in class ready for the start of their lessons and are encouraged to arrive five minutes before the start of the class.

- 3.3. Learners will have opportunities to discuss their attendance with their tutor and review this as part of their Individual Learning Plan. Where improvement is needed, attendance and punctuality targets may be agreed.
- 3.4. If absence is unavoidable, then learners must notify their tutor in advance wherever possible. Work will be set to cover the period of absence.
- 3.5. Where learner absence has not been notified in advance, a member of staff, usually the tutor, will follow up the absence and learners will be expected to explain the reason for the absence.
- 3.6. If a learner has three consecutive unauthorised absences with no contact and no agreed plan to return, ACL will make reasonable attempts to contact the learner. If there is no response and no known barriers preventing engagement, the learner may be withdrawn from the course. Learners with frequent non-consecutive absences may also be subject to review and possible withdrawal.
- 3.7. Where a break in learning is required for a significant period of time (e.g. long-term illness), learning can be suspended. A return date must be agreed in advance and learner will return on the same learning aim. ***This must not be used for short-term absences, such as holidays or short-term illness.***
- 3.8. High attendance will be recognised, rewarded and celebrated.

Staff

- 3.9. The ACL team appreciates our learners are adults and recognises that certain absences such as sickness, funerals, medical appointments, work interviews, court appearances and attendance at some religious holidays, are unavoidable. However, we will communicate clearly and appropriately our high expectations for punctuality and attendance. Where attendance or punctuality becomes a concern, staff will work with learners to identify barriers and agree appropriate actions. Where there is continued non-engagement and no agreed plan to improve attendance, withdrawal from the course may be considered.
- 3.10. Tutors will accurately and fully complete each class register by the end of the session and tutors will follow up each absence by a telephone call or email to the learner. Tutors will respectfully challenge any learner who arrives after the start of the class. Lateness (anything over five minutes) must be recorded in the register with an 'L'. Late learners will not be excluded from the class unless it affects health and safety.
- 3.11. Attendance concerns may sometimes indicate welfare, wellbeing or safeguarding concerns. Staff will follow ACL safeguarding procedures where attendance patterns give cause for concern.
- 3.12. Tutors will submit any Break in Learning (BIL) requests to relevant Curriculum Manager for authorisation. Register should be updated to reflect BIL period and Curriculum Manager and MIS Development Officer notified when learner returns.

3.13. Tutors will regularly discuss the attendance and lateness levels of a group. They will directly address issues of attendance and or punctuality of individuals in progress reviews; targets for improvement will be set and monitored.

3.14. Tutors and managers will monitor both punctuality and attendance and will have high expectations for both. Curriculum Managers will regularly monitor attendance and punctuality across their curriculum area and act where appropriate.

4. Course Induction

During learner induction sessions, tutors will provide clear information about ACL expectations for punctuality and attendance, including:

- Learners are expected to aim for 100% attendance, although some unavoidable absence is recognised. (overall service target 91%)
- The learner requirement to inform ACL on the first day of any absence either by contacting their tutor directly **or** by phone on 07702 959814 **or** email adultlearning@sthelens.gov.uk.
- The fact that all course absences will be recorded and monitored.
- Information about available support will be provided for learners whose attendance is affected by personal circumstances, health needs or other barriers to learning
- Expectation that learners attending community learning courses must achieve a minimum 80% of course outcomes to obtain a certificate of achievement.
- Learners will be advised that holidays booked during term time, irregular attendance or persistent late arrival to class is detrimental to both individual and whole group learning.

Appendix 1: Attendance and Punctuality Policy Summary

A Guide for Learners

Why Attendance Matters

Coming to class regularly and arriving on time helps you get the most from your course. Good attendance can help you:

- Achieve your learning goals
- Gain qualifications
- Build confidence and skills
- Progress into further learning, volunteering or employment

What We Ask of You

- ✓ Attend every class whenever possible.
- ✓ Arrive on time and be ready to learn.
- ✓ Let your tutor know if you cannot attend.
- ✓ Discuss any attendance difficulties with your tutor as early as possible.
- ✓ Work with your tutor to agree attendance goals if improvement is needed.

We Understand Life Happens

We know that adult learners can face challenges which affect attendance, including:

- Ill health
- Caring responsibilities
- Work commitments
- Financial difficulties
- Transport problems
- Language barriers
- Other personal circumstances

If something is making it difficult for you to attend, please speak to us. We will do our best to help and may be able to signpost you to additional support.

If You Cannot Attend

Please contact your tutor or the ACL team as soon as possible.

 07702 959814

 adultlearning@sthelens.gov.uk

Support for Learners

ACL is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment.

Reasonable adjustments and support will be provided where needed for learners with disabilities, medical conditions or other identified needs.

What Happens If Attendance Becomes a Concern?

If your attendance falls or you stop attending:

- We will try to contact you.
- We will discuss any barriers affecting your attendance.
- We will agree support and actions where appropriate.

If there is no contact and no agreed plan to return, you may be withdrawn from the course.

Our Commitment

We want every learner to learn, belong and thrive. We will support you to maintain good attendance. This will help you achieve, progress and get the best possible experience from your learning!